

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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FOR CU/EE AND EUR/EE

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP OEXC (KOVACEVIC, ZIVORAD)

SUBJ: BELGRADE MAYOR'S VISIT TO US

1. AN AIDE (VASIC) IN THE OFFICE OF BELGRADE MAYOR KOVACEVIC HAS INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT THE MAYOR IS PLEASED TO ACCEPT OFFER OF IVP GRANT. DUE TO PRESS OF OFFICIAL DUTIES, THE MAYOR WOULD PREFER A VISIT LASTING TWO WEEKS, BUT IN NO CASE LONGER THAN THREE, DEVOTED TO DISCUSSIONS ON URBAN PROBLEMS WITH MAYORS AND OTHER OFFICIALS OF SEVERAL LARGE CITIES. WASHINGTON, NEW YORK AND SAN FRANCISCO WERE MENTIONED AS POSSIBILITIES, BUT VASIC EMPHASIZED THAT THESE AND OTHER DETAILS COULD BE WORKED OUT AS PLANS TAKE SHAPE.

2. VASIC REQUESTED, THAT IN KEEPING WITH YUGOSLAV PROTOCOL PRACTICES, A HOST OR HOSTS FOR THE MAYOR'S VISIT BE DESIGNATED AND A FORMAL INVITATION BE EXTENDED. HE SUGGESTED THAT ONE OR MORE OF THE MAYORS OF THE CITIES KOVACEVIC WOULD VISIT MIGHT SERVE AS HOSTS.

3. THE AIDE SAID THE MAYOR IS AGREEABLE EITHER TO MAKE THE VISIT ALONE OR TO LEAD A DELEGATION, RECALLING THAT PRESIDENT FORD "INVITED" BELGRADE TO SEND A DELEGATION TO THE BICENTENNIAL DURING HIS VISIT HERE LAST YEAR.

4. AS TO THE MAYOR'S PERSONAL INTERESTS FOR AN IVP
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GRANT, VASIC STATED HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH BIG CITY

MAYORS FOR DISCUSSIONS ON TRANSPORTATION (ESPECIALLY SUBWAYS); URBAN PLANNING; LARGE DEPARTMENT STORE CHAINS AND OTHER CONSUMER MARKETING IDEAS; BURROUGH, NEIGHBORHOOD AND OTHER COMMUNAL GOVT IDEAS; SPEND A COUPLE DAYS SIGHTSEEING OR RELAXING. HE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO CALL ON US OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON WHOM VASIC DID NOT SPECIFY. HOWEVER, HE DID INDICATE THAT THE MAYOR HOPES HE MIGHT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THE PRESIDENT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS IDEAS THE MAYOR'S OFFICE HAS PUT FORWARD. SINCE KOVACEVIC HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROVED FOR AN IVP GRANT, WE ASSUME THERE WILL BE LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN ARRANGING FOR HIS VISIT TO SEVERAL LARGE CITIES. WE WOULD HOPE ONE OR MORE OF MAYORS INVOLVED COULD BE PERSUADED TO SERVE AS NOMINAL HOSTS AND PERHAPS GIVE AN APPROPRIATE SOCIAL FUNCTION IN KOVACEVIC'S HONOR. IN APPROACHING MAYOR BEAME, DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO RECALL THE KOVACEVIC, THEN DEPUTY MAYOR, PLAYED HOST TO NEW YORK CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION IN 1973 AND DURING HIS 1975 VISIT TO THE US, PREMIER BIJEDIC INVITED BEAME TO VISIT YUGOSLAVIA.

6. WE HOPE THAT WHILE IN WASHINGTON KOVACEVIC COULD CALL ON APPROPRIATE USG OFFICIALS IN, FOR EXAMPLE, THE DEPARTMENT, HUD AND CONGRESS. HE IS REGARDED HERE AS A BRIGHT, EFFECTIVE OFFICIAL WHO HAS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND APPEARS DESTINED FOR GREATER POLITICAL HEIGHTS. FOR THIS REASON, AND IN RECOGNITION OF KOVACEVIC'S PROMINENT ROLE IN THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT HERE LAST YEAR, AND OF BELGRADE'S ROLE AS HOSTESS TO MANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS OVER THE YEARS, WE WOULD ALSO HOPE A WAY COULD BE FOUND TO ARRANGE FOR HIM TO MEET THE PRESIDENT, IF ONLY BRIEFLY. PERHAPS HE COULD BE INCLUDED IN A GROUP RECEPTION DURING THE BICENTENNIAL EVENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, IF A VISIT THEN EITHER BY THE MAYOR ALONE OR AS HEAD OF A CITY DELEGATION IS FEASIBLE AND COMPATIBLE WITH SOP FOR HANDLING PRESIDENTIAL "INVITATIONS" TO THE CELEBRATIONS.

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7. EMBASSY HAS MADE NO COMMITMENTS ON ANY OF THE FOREGOING EXCEPT BASIC IVP GRANT, OF COURSE.

SWEITZER

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